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 News | Obituaries  
 Sports | Marketplace  
 Business | Site Map  
 Classifieds | Weather

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# Marine veterans gather to honor military 'icon'

By **MIKE DANNA**  
 Special to The Advocate



Advocate staff photo by Chris Preovolos

**Dallas 'E.T.' Montet, right, a member of the Acadiana Detachment of the Marine Corps League, talks to Marine Maj. Gen. R.G. Richard at an unveiling ceremony Sunday for a statue of Lt. Gen. John Archer Lejeune.**

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**NEW ROADS** – When Hillar Moore Jr. landed on the island of Iwo Jima on Feb. 20, 1945, he wasn't thinking much about the man whose military tactics helped craft the largest Marine invasion force in history.

As part of a 155 mm howitzer battalion of the U.S. Marine Corps' 2nd Division, his job was to provide artillery covering fire for his advancing comrades, all part of the 110,000-man Marine fighting force.

On Sunday, Moore, from Baton Rouge, again was present to lend a helping hand to his fellow Marines. He and 300 military veterans, dignitaries and others turned out for the unveiling of a bronze statue dedicated to Marine Lt. Gen. John Archer Lejeune.

Lejeune, a Pointe Coupee native, is heralded as the man who single-handedly

saved the Marine Corps after World War I and who was responsible for many of the tactics pioneered by the service. Camp Lejeune, the premier Marine training center in North Carolina, bears his name.

"He put the Marine Corps in a mode for combat," Moore said. "He gave the Marines focus and purpose, particularly where large-scale combat missions were concerned."

Moore was among about 30 Marine veterans dressed in red blazers, all members of the Marine Corps League, a brotherhood also formed by Lejeune.

The men, representing conflicts from World War II, Korea and Vietnam, stood at attention with active reserve Marines from Baton Rouge's 323 Weapons Company.

A Marine band played in light rain as the red drape fell from the life-size statue of Lejeune in front of the Pointe Coupee Parish Courthouse. Camp Lejeune Commanding Gen. R.G. Richard and Patrick Taylor, the man responsible for the dedication project, pulled the drape to end the 20-minute ceremony.

"He was a great man, an icon," Richard told the crowd, some standing under umbrellas and nearby store fronts to take cover from the rain.

Taylor said his spearheading the statue project to honor Lejeune is an effort to "repay my debt to the Marine Corps."

A former Marine, Taylor, who owns Taylor Energy Co. in New Orleans, commissioned the life-sized bronze statue created by artist Patrick Miller.

Lejeune served as the 13th commandant of the Marine Corps. Born in Batchelor in 1867, he pioneered many of the tactics and combat strategies used by the Marines today. He died in 1942, just as the Marines were putting into action the plans and programs he had developed to defeat the Japanese in the Pacific.

James P. Glennon, Lejeune's 82-year-old grandson, attended the ceremony. Himself a retired Marine Corps colonel, Glennon said he always loved and respected his grandfather but never felt pressured to enlist.

"He never asked me to join the Marines," Glennon said after the ceremony. "I just had his example."

[Top of page](#)

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